STUDENTS’ USE OF TECHNOLOGY

We identified the pattern of online activity for the typical college student, who tends to do 1-4 hours of homework or research each day and tends not to play video games. We also identified three additional student types: the gaming student, who spends the most time gaming; the social student, who spends most of their time online; and the studious student, who engages in online activities more moderately.

Technology has been incorporated into the lives of students, academically and otherwise. Only 2% of off-campus students don’t have access to the internet at home. Instructors are also using students’ technology as learning tools.

STUDENTS AND THEIR DEVICES

Laptops are still the most important device for students. Nearly all respondents (94%) say that their laptop is very or extremely important to their success. Hybrid tablet-laptop computers (67%), desktops (62%), and smartphones (53%) are also crucial to academic success for the students who own them.

The most common device combination remains laptops and smartphones—93% of students have access to both.

STUDENT SUCCESS TOOLS

Tools that aid in being a student are useful to the respondents who are aware of them. Students are less aware of tools that help academic performance, such as online awareness systems, but who are aware of them. Students are less aware of tools that aid in being a student are useful to the respondents, who engage in online activities more moderately.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students who have physical or learning disabilities are often unsatisfied with their institution’s awareness of their needs for accessible technology. Students with learning disabilities responded more positively than did students with physical disabilities and other disabilities, while students at associate’s and bachelor’s level institutions responded more positively than did those at master’s and doctoral institutions.

START STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENT DATA

Colleges and universities can use EDUCAUSE Technology Research in the Academic Community (ETRAC) data to develop a strategic plan to improve the quality of student experiences. The ETRAC survey includes items that assess student satisfaction with online collaboration tools, privacy control, and institutional support for accessible or adaptive technology as good or excellent.